



Songs For All Seasons

Lynn Blaser, soprano

Peter Barnes, baritone

Stephen Ralls, piano

Songs for
Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall

Sunday, January 22

3 pm

THE FACULTY ARTIST SERIES

Walter Hall
Edward Johnson Building



PROGRAMME

FALL



The Last Rose of Summer (Martha)
(Thomas Moore)

Friederich von Flotow
(1812-1883)

Now, O Now in this Brown Land
(James Joyce)

Ernest John Moeran
(1894-1950)

Pioggia

Ottorino Respighi
(1879-1936)

Rain. It is raining; through the wide-open windows comes that relief from persistent intense heat. From the garden rise cool gusts of reborn grass and reviving flowers. The tumult of colours quiets itself under the veil of entreating drops of rain and around the poplars, ashes and laurels, the thirsty clods of earth drink greedily. To be a plant, a leaf, a stem and, in the anguish of love (I thought), to have this great refreshment from the heavens. From the projecting windowsill, I was looking at the bushes, flowers and grasses and felt the raindrops beating on my hair. (Vittoria Aganoor Pompili)

Nebbie

Ottorino Respighi

Mists. I suffer. And far, far away the sleepy mists rise from the silent plain. Croaking loudly, the ravens, secure upon their black wings, cross above the withered heather. To the cruel biting of the air, the sorrowing tree trunks, praying, offer their bare thorny branches. How cold I am! I am alone. Echoing from the grey sky is a moan of dying hope. And it says to me: "Come, the valley is dark. O sad one, O unloved one, Come! Come!" (Ada Negri)

Four Stanzas on Autumn
(George Jonas)

Tibor Polgar
(1907-1993)

September (Vier letzte Lieder)

Richard Strauss
(1864-1949)

September. The garden mourns, rain falls cool upon the flowers. The summer quietly shivers towards its close. Leaf after leaf drips golden from the tall acacia tree. Summer, astonished and spent, smiles on the dying garden dream. It tarries long among the roses, yearning for rest, and slowly closes eyes which have grown weary. (Hermann Hesse)

WINTER



From
Cantata 209: Schleicht, spielende Wellen

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Recitative: In soft delights

Aria: What tho' blasts of wintry weather

(English texts and arrangement by Michael Diack)

Nevicata

Ottorino Respighi

Snowfall. On the squares and on the streets, flitting silent and light, the snow falls. The white flakes dance playfully in the wide sky then, tired, alight on the ground. In a thousand motionless forms on roofs and on chimneys, on columns and in gardens, it sleeps. All around is peaceful. Closed up in deep oblivion, and indifferent, the world is silent. But in the immense calm, the heart turns to memories and thinks of a calm love. (Ada Negri)

From "Die Jahreszeiten" (The Four Seasons)

Recitative: From out the East

Aria: In this, O vain misguided man

(Gottfried van Swieten after James Thomson)

Josef Haydn
(1732-1809)

Blow, blow thou winter wind (As You Like It)
(William Shakespeare)

Roger Quilter
(1877-1953)

Blow, blow thou winter wind
(As You Like It)
(William Shakespeare)

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco
(1896-1968)

Winter's Child
(Martin Dulman)

Thomas Pasatieri
(b. 1945)

Schlechtes Wetter, Op. 69, No. 5

Richard Strauss

Terrible weather. What terrible weather! There's a raging storm, and rain, and snow. I'm sitting at the window, looking out into the darkness. A solitary little light is glimmering and moving slowly away across the street. A motherly little woman totters along with her lantern. I think she's been buying some flour and eggs and butter to bake a cake for her big spoilt daughter who is lying at home in the easy chair, blinking sleepily at the light. Her golden curls fall luxuriantly over her sweet face. (Heinrich Heine)

Winterweihe, Op. 48, No. 4

Richard Strauss

Winter Dedication. In these wintry days when light hides itself away, let us carry in our hearts and truly say to one another that which fills us with inner light. It ignites a gentle flame that must burn strongly on and on. Whatever tenderly bonds soul to soul and builds a spiritual bridge, let that be our hushed watchword! The wheel of time may roll, we can scarcely interfere; lost to the glitter of the world, let us on our island dedicate day and night to blissful love. (Karl Henckell)

INTERMISSION



SPRING



Underneath the Abject Willow
(W. H. Auden)

Benjamin Britten
(1913-1976)

Frühlingsglaube, D. 686

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Faith in Spring. Soft breezes awaken; day and night they whisper and stir, busy everywhere. O fresh scents, O new sounds! Be anxious no more, poor heart -- everything, everything now must change! The world is lovelier each day; we do not know what is yet to come, for the blossoming is never-ending - - even the furthest, deepest valley flowers. Now, poor heart, forget your torment! Everything, everything must now change! (Ludwig Uhland)

Am Bach im Frühling, D. 361

Franz Schubert
By the brook in Spring. You break up now the cold ice crusts and ripple free and joyfully therein. The breezes blow gently again and moss and grass grow new and green. Alone with unhappy feelings, I walk as always beside your torrent. The whole world is in bloom, but my heart is not reborn. Within my breast, the same wind always blows. No hope dwells in my spirit. And if I find a little bloom therein, it is the blue flower of remembrance. (Franz von Schober)

Frühling (Vier letzte Lieder)

Richard Strauss
Spring. As in a gloomy vault, I dreamt so long of your trees and blue breezes, of your fragrance and the songs of your birds. Now like a miracle, you lie unfolded before me in lustrous adornment, flooded with light. You know me of old; you draw me to you tenderly, and your blessed presence sends a quivering through my every limb! (Herman Hesse)

The Merry Greenwood
(James Joyce)

Ernest John Moeran

These are the days
(Emily Dickinson)

Thomas Pasatieri

Spring Sorrow
(Rupert Brooke)

John Ireland
(1879-1962)

It was a lover and his lass
(Let Us Garlands Bring)
(William Shakespeare: As You Like It)

Gerald Finzi
(1901-1956)

SUMMER



Misalliance
(Michael Flanders)

Donald Swann
(1923-1994)

Early in the Morning
(Robert Hillyer)

Ned Rorem
(b. 1923)

Villanelle (Les Nuits d'Été)

Hector Berlioz
(1803-1869)

Country Song. When the new season arrives and frosts have disappeared, we will both go, my fair one, to gather lilies-of-the-valley in the wood. Beneath our feet will drop the pearls that tremble in the morning and we will listen to the blackbirds sing. The Spring has come, my fair one. It is the month that lovers bless and the bird, preening its feathers, sings its verses at the edge of its nest. Oh, sit with me than on this mossy bank and speak of our loves, and tell me in your sweet voice: "*Forever*". Far from the usual paths, let us wander, startling hidden rabbits and the stag who is admiring his great antlers in the forest pool. Then let us return home so happy and at ease, enlacing our fingers for baskets, carrying woodland strawberries. (Théophile Gautier)

Silent Noon
(Dante Gabriel Rossetti)

Ralph Vaughan Williams
(1872-1958)

Sure on this Shining Night
(James Agee)

Samuel Barber
(1910-1981)

Finale from *Candide*
(Richard Wilbur)

Leonard Bernstein
(1918-1990)

Tonight's Artists

Lynn Blaser began her singing career on-stage with the Canadian Opera Company Children's Chorus in Toronto. A graduate of the Royal Conservatory and the University of Toronto Opera Department, she won numerous scholarships and prizes across Canada including the first national Competitive Festival of Music. Two awards from the Canada Council took her to Europe for extended periods of study with Tito Gobbi in Italy and with leading coaches and conductors in Austria and Germany.

She has sung leading roles with the Canadian Opera Company on tour and in Toronto and also with Opera Hamilton, Calgary Opera, Theatre New Brunswick and the Festivals of Bermuda, Guelph, Algoma and Sharon and for CBC Television and many others.

Outside Canada, her appearances have included a concert tour of France for Jeunesses Musicales de France and Cleveland's Berea Bach Festival. She was chosen by the distinguished conductor, Margaret Hillis, for the Dame Myra Hess Concert Series in Chicago. This concert included the work of several Canadian composers, as did her recitals in Paris and London for the Canadian Cultural Centre.

Lynn Blaser is currently a member of the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto. She has been a vocal coach for the Ontario Youth Choir for five years and teaches privately in Toronto.

Born in Winnipeg, Peter Barnes is a versatile baritone with a reputation for outstanding performances in opera, oratorio, concert, and musical theater. He graduated from the University of Toronto Opera Division in 1985, and since then has appeared with opera companies and orchestras from coast to coast. His achievements include honours in the "Du Maurier Search for Stars", the National Bach Aria Competition, and the CBC Young Performers' Competition. Presently, Mr. Barnes is a cast member of *The Phantom of the Opera*, and his busy schedule includes teaching singing at the University of Toronto.

Stephen Ralls was educated at Oxford University, England (M.A. in Music) and at the Royal Academy of Music. His career as an accompanist began in London where he recorded frequently for the BBC. Mr. Ralls joined the staff of the Faculty of Music at the University of Toronto in 1978 and also has been a frequent music staff member of the Canadian Opera Company. Mr. Ralls is a coach at the Britten-Pears School for Advanced Musical Studies at Aldeburgh, England each summer. In 1982 he and Bruce Ubukata founded The Aldeburgh Connection which presents a wide selection of Canadian artists in programs of vocal recital music, usually set in a literary or historical context.